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HEALTH RESORT.

BY

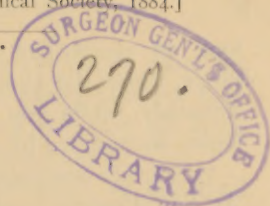
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CALIFORNIA AS A HEALTH RESORT.*

BY A. M. SHEW, M. D.

GENTLEMEN:—

Circumstances beyond my control render it impossible for me to read, at the annual meeting, the regular Dissertation which I prepared several months ago in obedience to your appointment. In lieu thereof, I beg you to accept some thoughts respecting the climate of California, and its advantages and disadvantages as a health resort. I am the more desirous of giving you my impressions on this important subject, because you, as physicians, have it in your province to prolong the lives of many invalids by furnishing correct advice as to *when* and *where* to go, when a change of climate is desirable, and also to prevent useless and unnecessary pain by dissuading patients from undertaking lengthy and tedious journeys, when suffering from incurable organic diseases.

I have met so many sad instances of great suffering endured by invalids who were sent out here long after there was a shadow of hope of cure—when only the tenderest care of loving hands at home should have ministered to their wants—that I am convinced you can do as much good in this negative way as by the more positive recommendation to those who really need a change of climate.

Let me, then, mention some of the principal disadvantages first. Under this head I shall not speak of climate, because California, with a coast line extending from north to south more than 800 miles, with high mountains, well-sheltered cañons, warm valleys and broad, sandy plains, offers every conceivable climate, from rigorous winter to soft and balmy spring.

Nothing has surprised me more than the marked contrasts at comparatively short distances. At Los Angeles, for instance, you

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look off twenty-five miles to the summit of the Sierra Madre range, where the snow-capped peaks gleam in the sunlight continuously, while you are feasting on strawberries and tropical fruits, surrounded by roses, heliotrope and rare exotic plants.

One other instance of this great contrast may be mentioned. At San Francisco, you require heavy under flannels and thick outer garments the entire year. The mean average temperature for January or July is about 50°.

By simply crossing the bay to Vallejo, 20 miles, and passing 10 miles into either Napa or Sonoma Valley, you reach a sheltered section, where the thermometer in the shade marks a temperature of 100° during nearly half the year. These facts may explain the diversity of opinions which have been expressed by equally intelligent observers. One traveler crosses the continent to San Francisco, hurries through the State, barely catching glimpses of places along the line of travel, and returns home with an uncomfortable impression indelibly stamped on his memory by the fogs or chill winds of San Francisco, and the execrably poor hotels along the route. Another journeys leisurely by the southern route to Yuma, Riverside, San Diego, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and Monterey, pausing long enough to feast on the oranges of San Gabriel, the strawberries of Pasedena and the grapes of Santa Clara Valley, until his mind is filled with wonder and delight at the fertility, warmth and possibilities of this youthful State.

Of the disadvantages, distance claims our first attention. Three thousand miles over the Rocky Mountains, requiring a journey of six or seven days, is a serious obstacle, even to the strong and healthy. It should receive your most serious consideration. Do not venture to send patients suffering from advanced organic diseases upon this long and tedious journey. Heart troubles, spinal affections and acute lung diseases contra-indicate travel which involves distance, elevation and discomforts. On the other hand, experience shows that "nervous" people, who suffer from insomnia at home, are benefited by the continuous motion of railroad travel, and thus find rest after other treatment has failed.

The great army of sufferers from dyspepsia, asthma, neurasthenia, and convalescents from acute diseases, may safely, and with advantage, undertake the journey. I have been surprised to find that nearly all passengers overland weigh more and feel better at the end of the journey than at its commencement.

While there are still many inconveniences and much room for improvement, yet the sleeping coaches and eating stations have been so greatly changed for the better during the past ten years that but little remains to be hoped for in this direction.

When you have decided that your patient would be benefited by travel, you may safely follow this rule: If you consider him able to cross the Atlantic, you need have no hesitation in advising him to undertake the overland journey to California.

Having tried both, I unhesitatingly give the preference to the latter; and in this opinion I am guided as much by observation as by personal experience.

The second disadvantage to be mentioned is that of indifferent accommodations for invalids after they have reached the Pacific Coast. I refer, of course, to the hotels or public houses. This objection, which at present is a serious one, applies to all Southern California, with the exception of Monterey, Santa Barbara and Sierra Madre Villa. There are many private houses where enterprise, taste and skill have, in a few years, made the most delightful cottage homes to be found in America. Some of these are located in sheltered cañons, where all of the tropical fruits are produced in abundance. Others spring up like luxuriant oases on the plains or near the ocean. Doubtless many invalids could find good accommodations and cordial greetings in some of the rural paradises. But these places are unknown to the seeker after health, and, when found, serve by contrast to make the defects of the public houses still more apparent. As this is one of the objections to Southern California which applies equally to all new countries, it should not be presented as a natural, but only as an artificial, defect, which time and money will obviate.

You observe I have noted some exceptions to this general statement. At Santa Barbara two good hotels—the Arlington and the Elwood—offer comfortable accommodations for two hundred guests. Both houses are well situated and admirably kept. Here, too, may be found gentle and safe saddle-horses at reasonable rates for those who fancy this sport and are well enough to enjoy it.

Perhaps the best small hotel in California is the celebrated Sierra Madre Villa, owned by Mr. Cogswell, the artist. It is situated in the highest part of the foothills, 1,800 feet above sea-level, at the base of the Sierra Madre range, fifteen miles from Los Angeles. The wonderful developments, the peculiar charms and

the future possibilities of the country may be seen while sitting, in January, on the well-kept lawns of the Villa, breathing in the perfume of rare tropical flowers and feasting the eye upon the beauty of orchards, groves and vineyards of the valley. But it is at the quiet old town of Monterey, formerly the capital of California, that we find, in the "*Del Monte*," the *ideal* hotel. Taking everything into consideration, this hotel, with its fare, rates, appointments, accommodations, grounds, drives, beach, pavilion for bathing, etc., etc., has no equal in the world.

The Hotel del Monte is owned by the Southern Pacific Railroad. It is constructed in the modern gothic style, and cost, with its furniture and other appointments, a half a million of dollars. The house is elegantly furnished throughout, and is kept so scrupulously neat and clean that the visitor is sure to think it can have been opened but yesterday. Both hot and cold water are carried through the hotel, and there are numerous bath-rooms on the different floors free to guests.

The site selected was in a lovely grove of pine, oak and cedar, the trees being sufficiently scattered to admit of the adornment of the grounds by means of drive-ways, foot-paths, lawns and beds of flowers. Under the direction of an accomplished landscape gardener, a corps of forty men is kept constantly engaged in embellishing the gardens, avenues and walks.

Here and there are swings, croquet plots, an archery, lawn-tennis grounds, and bins of fine beach sand, the latter being intended for the use and delectation of the children who cannot await the bathing hour for the daily visit to the beach. The use of all these, as well as the ladies' billiard-room, are free to guests.

Driving and riding constitute two of the leading amusements of Monterey.

Well-kept macadamized roads have been constructed a score of miles along the ocean, through cypress groves, and back over the mountain, and nearly all the time within the borders of the hotel company's property. Coming to this beautiful place in January, from the snow and ice of New England, and finding oneself surrounded by shade trees, green grass and bright flower plots, it is difficult to shake off the impression that you are still in the mazes of dreamland, from which you dread to be awakened. After a stay of nearly three months I am convinced that, considering everything, — climate, hotel accommodations, sea-bathing and

beautiful surroundings,— Monterey approaches nearer to the Ideal Sanitarium than any place I have ever visited. One of the distinctive peculiarities of Monterey (also Santa Barbara) is its equable temperature, the mean averages for the month of January being 50° , and July 65° . As a result, invalids and travelers from New York and New England come here to get warm, and occupy the hotel during the winter and spring, while the Californians flock to it from the hot inland valleys to cool off, during the summer.

There is a steady *tone* in the atmosphere which enables and invites you to live out of doors beneath the clear, blue skies, without feeling the enervating effect of the heat further south.

From January to December, year in and year out, the weather partakes of that delightful interlude known in the East and South as Indian summer. This is well shown by the fact that at his ranch in a small cañon, seven miles from Monterey, Mr. W. W. Thompson has picked ripe strawberries from his vines *every day* during the past *four years*.

What I have said respecting the climate of Monterey applies equally well to the Pacific Coast from Santa Cruz to San Diego.

During what may be termed the winter months 50° will mark, on an average, the mean temperature, and water is never congealed. The very fact that many persons wear overcoats and sleep in blankets the year round, and that all field work from January to December is performed by laborers in their shirt-sleeves, presents a better and more unequivocal illustration of the equability of temperature, perhaps, than any other incident that might be presented.

What is generally known as the rainy season commences in November and lasts two or three months. Many people who have never visited California erroneously imagine that during the "wet season"—so called in contradistinction to the dry months—rain never ceases to descend. This popular error is corrected by glancing at weather tables, which invariably show that during the wet season in California there is not only less rain but more fair and beautiful days than in that portion of the United States between the Mississippi River and the Atlantic Ocean during the same time.

The following figures, representing the mean temperature of January and July, and the average annual rain-fall (in inches) in

Mentone, St. Paul, St. Augustine (Florida), and also in San Diego, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles and Monterey (California), afford a subject well worthy of consideration:—

	Jan.	July.	Rain-fall.
San Diego,	57°	65°	10
Santa Barbara,	56	66	15
St. Augustine,	59	77	55
St. Paul,	13	73	30
Mentone,	30	69	23
Los Angeles,	55	67	18
Monterey,	50	65	14

Cold with moisture leads to pulmonary diseases; heat with moisture leads to malarial fevers. From such diseases the coast of Southern California is remarkably free. The dryness of the atmosphere prevents malarial diseases, and is also a great relief to bronchial affections.

You may ask, how can an invalid pass the time; in other words, what amusements and recreations are offered? Samuel Bowles once wrote of Los Angeles, that "It is the happiness of Paradise to breathe the air and to bask in the sunshine of Southern California." To the confirmed invalid who has been for months imprisoned by the rigors of an Eastern winter nothing more would seem desirable; but it would hardly satisfy the convalescent who begins to feel the vigor and buoyancy of returning health. Here again the advantages of California are manifest. In all parts of the State the sportsman finds use for his gun and rod. Squirrels, rabbits, wild geese, quail, ducks and deer can be found near at hand; while larger game, such as panthers, lions and grizzly bears, abound in all the wooded mountains in the State. The streams are alive with trout and salmon, which can be legally taken after April 1st.

Time will not allow me to do more than name some of the numerous springs which abound in all parts of the State. In variety, number and character, they are found in California at convenient points, occasionally grouped together so that the invalid may have the benefits of soda, sulphur, alum, magnesia or iron springs, hot or cold, while staying at one hotel. The waters of Paso Robles, Paraiso, Gilroy, Harbin, Byron, Seigler, and of other hot springs, are beneficial in the treatment of sciatica, rheumatism, gout, paralysis (without organic lesion), and cutaneous

complaints. The hot springs of Lake Napa, Sonoma, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara and San Diego Counties have no superiors in eastern States, while many of the cold sulphur, soda and chalybeate springs of Napa Lake and Sonoma Counties excel those of Bethesda and Saratoga. They are all accessible, with good, small hotels, situated in the midst of some of the grandest mountain scenery to be found on the Pacific Coast.

Perhaps the most celebrated of these are the soda springs located six miles northward from Napa City.

These springs furnish a daily flow of four thousand gallons of water impregnated with iron, soda, magnesia, lime and muriate of soda, with free carbonic acid gas, in such happy combination as to impart pleasure, health and physical improvement as the result of their use. From more than twenty of these springs is poured forth the article well known in the commercial world as "Napa Soda."

The water is bottled and sold just as it flows, pure from nature's laboratory, with all her sparkling freshness still upon it.

The place is not what is usually termed a fashionable resort. It is a delightful spot in which to bathe, and hunt, and fish, and sleep, and dream, and rest, and forget the busy, whirling city, with its work, worry and disappointments.

Perhaps I have said enough to indicate, in a general way, the advantages, and a few of the peculiarities, of California as a health resort.

Many extravagant statements have been made by tourists, conveying the impression that frost is unknown, that no fires are needed except for cooking, that it always rains at night, that it is never uncomfortably warm in summer, and various inaccuracies tending to give a false impression of the country.

The residents of Southern California do not claim that their climate has *no* discomforts; but they maintain stoutly, and with reason, that no clime has fewer. I have noticed that the longer one remains in California, the stronger becomes his attachment, and the less his inclination to return to the changeable climate of New England.

In closing, permit me to briefly indicate some of the classes of invalids which are benefited by coming to the Pacific coast.

Persons having sensitive lungs, and those in the early stages of consumption, always find relief, and sometimes permanent restoration, in the warm, dry regions of Southern California.

So, too, sufferers from rheumatism, neuralgia, nervous prostration and asthma. In fact, all the disorders in which out-door life is indicated may be treated in this dry, warm climate with a fair prospect of success.

On the other hand, as you value the good will of those who look to you for advice, do not subject invalids suffering from chronic, incurable diseases to the discomforts of a long journey, when no radical benefit can be expected. The key to this climate is to be found in the fact that it has a warm sun and cool air. You may sit under the shade and pick ripening figs by day, and then retire to sleep under heavy blankets at night. The day furnishes warmth which is not debilitating, while the cool nights bring refreshing sleep. There is scarcely a day of the year a large portion of which may not be spent out of doors.

Add to these advantages the choicest and most tempting array of fresh fruits and vegetables for every month of the year, and you have all of the requisites in a climate for invalids.

Thus far only a commencement has been made in settling this great State. At no distant day, when it shall have been cut up into small farms and occupied by thrifty Eastern people, we may expect a veritable Paradise on earth, and such a Sanitarium for invalids as the world has not known.

